FBIS DAILY REPORT

MIDDLE EAST & SOUTH ASIA REVIEW

19 NOVEMBER 1984

Libyan Assassination Plot

A Libyan Foreign Liaison Bureau statement carried by JANA on 18 November denied Egyptian claims that Libya is plotting to assassinate several Western and Arab leaders, asserting that Egyptian President Husni Mubarak's allegations are intended to sabotage Libya's "distinguished" relations with the countries concerned. However, the statement did not mention 'Abd al-hamid al-Bakkush, the former Libyan prime minister residing in Egypt whose "execution" by a "revolutionary force" was announced by Tripoli radio on 16 November but who subsequently confirmed in a MENA interview that he had cooperated with the Egyptian security authorities to trick the Libyans into believing their assassination attempt had succeeded. Giving details of the abortive Libyan plot at a news conference reported by MENA, Egyptian Interior Minister Major General Ahmad Rushdi said that fake photographs of Al-Bakkush's death had duped Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi into believing that the operation had succeeded. In reality, Egyptian security forces monitored and apprehended the terrorist group, which was hired by the Libyan People's Bureau chief in Malta to carry out the operation in return for a large sum of money. Noting that Al-Qadhdhafi went to Malta after learning that the attempt had failed, Rushdi speculated that the Libyan leader went there to punish his intelligence men.

President Mubarak also commented on the Al-Bakkush affair in remarks reported by MENA, stating that Libya gave $106,000 to the terrorist group, which consisted of Maltese and British nationals. As for other Libyan plots, Mubarak accused the Libyans of planning the assassination of the British prime minister, the French president, the FRG chancellor, the king of Saudi Arabia, the president of the UAE, and the amir of Kuwait. Although Mubarak denied that Egypt has increased its military preparedness along the border with Libya because of these developments, informed sources in Cairo cited by AFP asserted that Egyptian aircraft have stepped up their patrols in the border area.

Chad Withdrawal

French President Francois Mitterrand told a press conference on 16 November, the day after his surprise meeting on Crete with Libya's Colonel Al-Qadhdhafi, that several hundred Libyan soldiers remain in Chad despite the Franco-Libyan withdrawal agreement, "less than certain foreign reports maintain," but more than there should be, AFP reported. Mitterrand went on to say that Al-Qadhdhafi had assured him that "everything had been ordered for a full evacuation," the agency added, noting that Mitterrand also declared that France could try to normalize relations with Libya "without renouncing its other friendships." On the same issue, French External Relations Minister Claude Cheysson charged that Al-Qadhdhafi "has not kept his word," according to Paris radio. Meanwhile, the French Defense Ministry announced that Defense Minister Charles Hernu and Armed Forces Chief of Staff Jeannou Lacaze left for Ndjamena on 18 November, AFP disclosed. Moreover, on the same day the French Air Force resumed reconnaissance flights over Chad, the agency added.

As for libyan comment on Mitterrand's remarks, JANA asserted that in his press conference he "denied the U.S. and Western imperialist claims" about a Libyan military presence in Chad.

Jordan Arms Sources

Jordan has "closed the door" on arms deals with the United States because the conditions proposed are unacceptable, and it will turn to Western Europe, the Soviet Union, "and any other source that can supply us with our weapons needs," King Husayn said in an *Al-AHRAM* interview carried by *AL-RA'Y* on 16 November. He added that arms will be a topic for talks during his upcoming visit to the Soviet Union, for which no date has yet been fixed. However, Israeli officials in Washington are concerned about new arms deals between the United States and Jordan that will be submitted to Congress in a few weeks, Jerusalem radio reported, noting that the officials were reacting to a *NEW YORK TIMES* list of Jordan's arms requests.

PLO

Fatah will withdraw from the PLO if the PNC fails to achieve a quorum for its forthcoming meeting in Amman, Fatah Central Committee member Salah Khalaf stated in remarks reported by the *JORDAN TIMES* on 19 November. Khalaf's statement indicated confidence that Fatah will obtain the necessary quorum for the PNC meeting, according to Palestinian observers cited by the paper.

Israel

Budget Cut — The Cabinet has established a ministerial committee to decide how to achieve the finance minister's goal of a $550 million budget cut, Jerusalem radio reported.

Yacht Incident — Egyptian soldiers fired at an Israeli yacht seeking shelter from stormy seas in an Egyptian coastal inlet north of Ra's Muhammad on 14 November, ITIM reported.

Lebanon

Previewing the next round of Israeli-Lebanese talks at Al-Naqurah, Jerusalem radio said the Israelis will again reject the Lebanese proposals, adding that if Lebanon persists in making demands that constitute attempts to play for time, Israel will consider taking unilateral steps in southern Lebanon. Earlier, after his release and deportation from the south by the Israelis on 16 November, Amal Movement official Mahmud Faqih stated that he intends to return to the south to continue the struggle against the Israelis, Beirut radio reported. Noting

Faqih's release, Jerusalem television asserted that Faqih was detained "by mistake."

As for the Lebanese Government's plans to deploy its Army along the coastal road south of the capital, Prime Minister Rashid Karami stated in remarks broadcast by Beirut radio on 17 November that he hopes the "implementation process" will begin in about 1 week. Meanwhile, the Druze militia have deployed T-55 tanks and heavy mortars in the Al-Kharrub area, according to Jerusalem radio.

Syria

Interviewed by Paris radio a week prior to French President Mitterrand's first visit to Syria, President Hafiz al-Asad affirmed that although Rif'at al-Asad is abroad he remains vice president "and no one in Syria can say the contrary." As for the withdrawal of Syrian and Israeli forces from Lebanon, Al-Asad declared that the Israelis should withdraw unconditionally and that the Syrians will leave when the Lebanese Government "recovers its health" and requests it. Asked whether Syrian troops will occupy former IDF positions if the Israelis withdraw from Lebanon, Al-Asad said the location of the Syrian presence in Lebanon stems from the decision of the Lebanese Government.

Iraq

Foreign Minister Tariq 'Aziz will pay a visit of "several days" to the United States during which he will meet with President Ronald Reagan on 26 November, INA announced.

Iran

During talks with President 'Ali Khamene'i on 17 November, Syrian Vice President 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam stressed the "complete coordination between Syria and Iran" to confront the Iraqi regime and the need for strategic cooperation among Muslim countries against the Zionist regime, IRNA reported.

GCC Summit

The Kuwaiti Prime Minister will apprise Iran of the GCC initiative for ending the Gulf war on a visit to Tehran immediately after the convocation of the GCC summit on 27 November, *AL-SIYASAH* disclosed on 15 November, citing diplomatic sources in Baghdad. As for military matters, the GCC secretary general said in remarks reported by KUNA that the summit will stress strengthening cooperation and boosting military potential, but it is premature to speak of full unification.

Afghanistan

Speaking for the first time on the prospects of a Soviet troop withdrawal from Afghanistan, the Soviet ambassador to Pakistan said the withdrawal could begin as soon as an agreement banning foreign interference in Afghanistan's internal affairs is signed by its southern neighbors, particularly Pakistan, according to AFP.

Maghreb

Soviet Diplomacy — USSR Minister of Culture Petr Demichev concluded his "official friendly visit" to Algeria, during which he met with Prime Minister Abdel Hamid Ibrahimini and other Algerian officials, with the signing of a protocol on cultural cooperation, TASS reported.

Western Sahara — The Saharan People's Liberation Army claimed that 90 Moroccan soldiers were killed from 7 to 12 November in the "Great Maghreb Offensive," Algiers radio reported.

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Government Protests Pakistani 11 Nov Border Attack

LD171647 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 17 Nov 84

[Text] The Pakistan charge d'affaires to Kabul was summoned to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at 1000 today. The following statement was read to him by the official in charge of the first political section, concerning the 11 November aggression by Pakistan's Armed Forces in the Barikowt region.

In accordance with information provided by the relevant DRA authorities, as a result of repeated heavy-weapons fire on 11 November in the Barikowt region by the Pakistani Armed Forces stationed near the DRA border, a 9-year-old child was martyred, a woman was seriously injured, and great material losses incurred.

The DRA strongly denounces and condemns these armed and repeated attacks on the DRA by the aggressive Pakistani forces, and thus strongly protests these acts to the Pakistan Government. The DRA points out that the Pakistan authorities should immediately halt these armed and provocative attacks. Heavy responsibility and dangerous consequences stemming from these repeated attacks will otherwise will rest with the responsible Pakistani authorities.

Army Political Affairs Head Meets Herat Battalion

LD162006 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 15 Nov 84

[Text] Brigadier General Yasin Sadeqi, secretary of the PDPA Central Committee and head of the Army's Political Affairs, during his visit to the training battalion of Herat military division yesterday and the day-before, met the officers, NCO's and men of this battalion in a friendly and cordial atmosphere.

The correspondent of BIA reports that at this meeting the head of the Army's Political Affairs drew the attention of the battalion personnel to their duties and gave necessary instructions about the improvement of their work.

Party Work in Armed Forces Emphasized

LD172223 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1200 GMT 17 Nov 84

[Excerpts] The revolution and the course of the revolutionary process have entered new and extended areas, facing new duties. The DRA Armed Forces, in the framework of these new duties, bear the main weight of armed struggle against the counterrevolutionaries. In light of this fact, they should be continuously strengthened in numbers and quality.

Now local, regional, tribal, and militia units, making tactical and effective use of weapons and war techniques, can accomplish independent and complicated duties. This is a great victory for the consolidation of the ranks of revolutionary fighters who took their armed positions in the hot trenches of battle.

Regarding improving the efficiency and fighting ability of the Armed Forces, the main center of attention must be political, ideological, and party work. The officers, NCO's and young men should be given the opportunity to carry out their duties independently so that confidence in their ability, especially their practical military knowledge, is enhanced.

In conclusion, emphasis must be placed on the growing rock-like consolidation of the party's unity in the Armed Forces. No minor deviation from party principles should be allowed. Anyone who does not cooperate with party unity, particularly in the Armed Forces, wittingly or unwittingly supplies grist to the mills of the counterrevolutionaries and serves our enemies. With further courage we should rid the party of these elements.

Kabul Leaders Pledge To Struggle Against Rebels

LD170004 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 16 Nov 84

[Excerpt] Elders, leaders, and representatives of the villages of the 8th ward of Kabul City today in a broad tribal jerga pledged intensification of the struggle against savage rebels and terrorists who are disrupting the workers peaceful lives.

A BAKHTAR correspondent reports that representatives and elders of the people of the villages of Sahak, Shewaki, Mohammadzai, Qal'a-e Hassan Khan, Welayati, Qal'a Hashmat Khan, Beni Hesar, and other villages of the 8th ward of Kabul City took part in this tribal jerga which was held in Sayed Nur Mohammad Shah Mina Girls School. The jerga was also attended by Zohur Razmjo, candidate member of the PDPA Central Committee Politburo and secretary of Kabul City party committee, Brigadier Mohammad Nabi Azimi, first deputy minister of the Defense Ministry, Brigadier Shahnawaz, a number of the commanders of the Central Army Corp, and a number of party and state cadres who spoke on the lofty objectives of the revolutionary party and state.

Addressing the jerga, Zohur Razmjo spoke on the importance of intensifying the struggle against the counterrevolution and completely crushing the homeland's enemies who disrupt the workers' peaceful lives. He urges further solidarity of the working compatriots to defend the gains of the April revolution.

In return, four of the elders, on behalf of the participants of the jerga, expressed readiness to further strengthen the revolution defense groups in their regions and to intensify the struggle against the enemies of the revolution.

Party Delegation Departs for Romania

LD172132 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 17 Nov 84

[Text] Mir Saheb Karwal, secretary of the PDPA Central Committee, leading a party delegation left for Romania today at the invitation of the Communist Party Central Committee to take part in the 13th congress of that country's Communist Party.

Paper Cited on Formation of Commerce Ministry Body

[Editorial report] Kabul Domestic Service in Dari and Pashto at 0205 GMT on 15 November in its "In the Mirror of the Press" program carries a 5-minute report on a story in a "recent issue" of *HAQIQAT-E ENQELAB-E SAWR*. The newspaper describes the creation of the "Commercial Retail Enterprise" within the Ministry of Commerce, interviewing the leading official of the new body.

Answering the paper's question on the purpose of the enterprise, the head of the new organization advises that the Commercial Retail Enterprise will "supply and present the commodities needed by our compatriots and will help stabilize prices and competition in private commercial sectors and, in general, will bring all the activities of government outlets under a single, consistent authority." It will also "lay the groundwork for ending not only the present disorders and inconsistencies in the functioning of the government outlets, but for creating more facilities." The official went on to explain that the enterprise intends to open "large government supermarkets," the first of which will open "soon" in Kabul City.

Pakistani Paper on Afghan Refugee Situation

GF161310 Karachi MASHRIQ in Urdu 21 Oct 84 p 4

[Excerpt] There are more than 3 million Afghan refugees in Pakistan. Afghanistan's total population is about 15 million; in other words, 20 percent of Afghanistan's population has moved to Pakistan. (Afghan refugees have gone to Iran and some other countries also and they may number about 1.5 million; therefore,about 1/4 of the Afghanistan population have become refugees.) Pakistan has given refuge to them only for reasons of Islamic brotherhood and on humanitarian considerations. Pakistan is spending about $5 million annually on them. Scarcey one-half of this amount is paid by the United Nations and other philanthropic countries. The rest is paid by Pakistan from its own resources, which is a great burden on Pakistan's developing economy. Besides these economic problems, the Afghan refugees are creating several economic, political, and administrative problems. There is also another problem — the danger of spies and saboteurs getting into Pakistan in the guise of refugees. Some antisocial elements who have entered Pakistan along with these refugees have created more problems by smuggling narcotics and other goods. There is also the problem of [Afghanistan]violating Pakistani borders on the excuse of pursuing Afghan mujahidin. There is also the danger of Soviet invasion. Pakistan can get rid of these problems only if the Afghan problem is solved peacefully and Afghan refugees return to their homes in an honorable manner. The Pakistan Government is doing all it can in this respect, but this question cannot be resolved unless the Soviet Union gives in to international pressure. This pressure can only be obtained if we arouse world awareness of this problem.

Pakistani Paper Sees Rift in Afghan Ruling Party

GF191030 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 28 Oct 84 p 1

[Text] Quetta, Oct 27 — Lack of coordination and confrontation between the two groups (Parcham and Khalq) of the ruling People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan came to light in today's meeting of the Politburo held under the chairmanship of the Afghanistan President Babrak Karmal.

Babrak Karmal who also addressed the Politburo called upon the members of the ruling Democratic Party (PDP) to work as a team as they had to face a lot of challenges ahead. According to Radio Kabul, the Afghanistan president also stressed the need of promoting ideological and political education among the masses which he said, was the basis of the success of the April Revolution.

He directed the Politburo to fulfil its responsibilities towards lessening the polarisation in different factions of the party.

Political observers here believe that Karmal's indication towards factionalism in PDP is a clear-cut manifestation of some escalting tensions in the ruling party. It was the first time that Radio Kabul had broadcast the news about rifts in the party.

Rajiv Gandhi Praises Indira at Delhi Meeting

BK190853 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 19 Nov 84

[Text] A mammoth public meeting is now being held at the boat club in New Delhi to pay homage to Mrs Indira Gandhi on her birth anniversary. Addressing the meeting a short while ago, the prime minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, said that although Mrs Gandhi is no more with us, her ideals continue to guide the nation. We have to think what Mrs Gandhi did for the country.

Mr Gandhi said many big powers of the world tried to shake India through the assassination of Mrs Gandhi. But we have shown to the world that India is stronger than all such powers. After 37 years of independence, we can say that we have the freedom that very few countries in the world have.

The prime minister's speech is continuing.

uf headlineRajiv Comments After Survey of Cyclone Hit Areas

BK161619 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 16 Nov 84

[Excerpts] The prime minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, today made an aerial survey of the cyclone affected areas in Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. He was accompanied by the Andhra Pradesh chief minister, Mr Rama Rao; the Tamil Nadu finance minister, Mr Endunchezhiyan; and the union energy minister, Mr Shiv Shankar.

Addressing a news conference at Nellor in Andhra Pradesh, the prime minister said a central team will soon visit the cyclone affected areas in the state to assess the damage. He said the quantum of central grants for relief measures will be announced after evaluating the situation. However, Mr Gandhi announced 15 lakh rupees each for Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu from the prime minister's national fund.

An agency report says the Sriharikota range of the Indian Space Research Organization is severely affected in the cyclone. It still remained cut off from the main land. A naval helicopter made a sorty to drop food packets to the stranded persons numbering about 20,000. A spokesman of the Sriharikota high altitude range has said in Madras that the Army and naval personnel are making efforts to reach the Sriharikota Island by boats.

According to latest reports, the death toll in the cyclone affected areas in Andhra Pradesh has gone up to 29.

Further Comments

BK170925 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 17 Nov 84

[Text] At the press conference in Madras, the prime minister answered questions on different subjects. In reply to a question, Mr Rajiv Gandhi said that the alliance between the Congress-I and the ruling All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam in Tamil Nadu is in the national interest.

About recent happenings in Nankana Sahib in Pakistan, the prime minister said these were not in line with what General Ziaul Haq said in New Delhi. The prime minister wished Pakistan's actions were more in tune with what they say to improve relations with India.

Commenting on Sri Lanka, Mr Rajiv Gandhi said India is committed to genuine and lasting friendship with that country. However, our stand in regard to Sri Lankan Tamils remains unchanged as it is relevant to the entire country and South Asia. We will continue our efforts to settle the issue in a manner acceptable to all.

The prime minister has since arrived in the capital.

Chavan on Defense Achievements Under Mrs Gandhi

BK181019 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 18 Nov 84

[Text] The defense minister, Mr S.B. Chavan, has said India's defense forces acquired a multidimensional strike capability during the stewardship of the late prime minister, Mrs Indira Gandhi. In an interview to the UNITED NEWS OF INDIA on the eve of the 68th birth anniversary of Mrs Gandhi in New Delhi, he said tremendous advances were also made in defense research and development. During her tenure, he said, the country entered an era of manufacturing highly sophisticated aricraft, warships, tanks, missiles, and electronic equipment which would match the best in the world. In all these fields, Mrs Gandhi's abiding interest in taking the country forward on the road to self-reliance has left a permanent influence, Mr Chavan said.

Referring to Mrs Gandhi's emphasis on building up a sound technological base, Mr Chavan said, it has helped in implementing planned and concerted programs to step up indigenous production. Giant strides were made in the past decade and a half in the field of defense production. The minister said backward areas drew her special attention in setting up defense factories. Only 4 days before her tragic death, she laid the foundation stone of a 250-crore ordnance factory in the backward area of Bolangir in Orissa. Besides, the welfare of the defense personnel was in her mind throughout. During her tenure, two cadre reviews were carried out to end stagnation and open up new opportunities for promotion to higher ranks. Early this year, she set up a high-level committee to look into the problems of ex-servicemen, Mr Chavan added.

Dhillon's 'Pilgrimage' to Pakistan Reported

BK171619 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 9 Nov 84 pp 1, 7

[Text] Islamabad, Nov 8 (PTI) — Mr Ganga Singh Dhillon, nephew of the late Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale is among the 1,500 or so "Khalistan" activists currently on a "pilgrimage" to Pakistan.

Mr Dhillon was reported to have visited Nankana Sahib on Wednesday for about an hour where the militants Sikhs held an anti-India convention.

Inflammatory speeches aimed at inciting Sikhs in India were made by Mr Jasbir Singh and others.

Nearly 2,000 'Yatrees' (pilgrims from India visiting Pakistan to participate in the birth anniversary celebrations of Guru Nanak) have been maintaining a low profile.

The Indian pilgrims find themselves surounded by the militant visitors from the United Kingdon, the United States and Canada.

Reports suggest that the Pakistan Government has for the first time allowed such a large contingent of Sikh "pilgrims" from the West.

The three-hour convention at Nankana Sahib saw speaker after speaker exhorting Sikh and Muslims to join hands against "Hindi imperialists".

The convention hall echoed with pro-Khalistan and anti-India slogans, according to reports.

The Indian Embassy here has already lodged strong protests with the Pakistan foreign office against the publicity being given to self-styled Khalistan leaders.

1-Day Poll for Southern, Eastern States

BK170935 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 17 Nov 84

[Text] All the states in the southern and eastern regions will have a 1-day poll. This was decided at the meeting held by the Election Commission with the senior officials of the states in New Delhi today. The meeting was convened by the chief election commissioner, Mr R.K. Trivedi.

The states, which were represented at the meeting, were: Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Orissa, Bihar, Sikkim, and the union territories of Pondicherry, and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

The deputy election commissioner, Mr V. Ramakrishanan, told our correspondent that the actual date in which polling will be held in these states will be announced on Monday. There were two separate meetings: one, for the southern region and the other, for the eastern region.

The meetings, which were attended by officials of the Union Home Ministry and the directors general of police of the states, also made an assessment of the requirement of the security forces during the elec[illegible] period. Another meeting of the states and union territories of the northeastern region is being held in the afternoon to discuss matters relating to the election.

Election Commission Sets Dates

BK171305 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 17 Nov 84

[Text] Eight states and three union territories in southern, eastern, and northeastern regions will have a 1-day poll on the 24th of next month. They are Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Orissa, Bihar, West Bengal, Sikkim, and Tripura; and Pondicherry, Arunachal Pradesh, and Lakshadweep. Andhra Pradesh and Manipur and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands will have a single day's polling on the 27th. This was decided at a separate meeting convened by the Election Commission in New Delhi today.

The deputy election commissioner, Mr V. Ramakrishnan, told our correspondent that the governments of Nagaland, Meghalaya, and Mizoram have expressed their inability to have the poll during the Christmas period. The Election [Commission] has agreed to consider the request. The Gujarat government has favored polling on days. It has been, however, requested by the Election Commission to reconsider the matter and to have the polling on a single day.

Parties Merge To Contest Lok Sabha Election

BK180327 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 18 Nov 84

[Text] In Meghalaya, the All Party Hill Leaders Conference and the Hill State People's Democratic Party have decided to merge into a single political party. These parties will now contest the coming Lok Sabha election under the name of the Hill Peoples' Union. A joint meeting of leaders of the two parties has set up an election committee.

Review Notes Economic Improvement This Year

BK181145 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 18 Nov 84

[Text] An official review in New Delhi says there has been an all-round improvement in the country's economy this year. Food production increased to 151 million tons in 1983-84. The power generation capacity has risen to 14,000 megawatts which represents 50 percent of the total capacity created during the previous 3 decades. On the price front, the review said in the current year, prices have been brought under reasonable control by a combination of production, monetary discipline, and other factors. Foreign exchange reserves rose to over 6,000 crore rupees by the first week of this month. In view of the improvement in the overall balance of payments, the government decided to forego the balance of $1.1 billion available under the IMF facility. The review says that the sixth plan target of 5.2 percent annual growth in gross national product is likely to be exceeded.

Armed Forces Carry Out Cyclone Relief Work

BK180910 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 18 Nov 84

[Text] In Andhra Pradesh, the Army, the Navy, and the Air Force are carrying out relief operations in a big way in the cyclone hit areas. The two naval ships stationed near Sriharikota have started providing essential commodities to the marooned people on the coast. Four helicopters are continuing airdropping of food packets in the flooded coastal villages occupied mostly by fishermen. A state government spokesman told All India radio correspondent at Nellore a short while ago that the national highway has been thrown open to traffic between Sulurpet and Madras. He said relief teams are able to reach more areas of the marooned villages. Nineteen thousand food packets have so far been airdropped in these villages.

The state electricity minister, Mr Sriniwasulu Reddy, told newsmen in Hyderabad today that power supply has been restored in Nellore and Guntur towns. Efforts are on to restore power supply in other towns. About 340 relief camps have been organized to help the affected people.

Meanwhile, the death toll in Nellore District has gone up to 191. A state government spokesman said in Sulurpet taluk [administrative subdivision] alone, 85 people died. In Lakaddu taluk 53 people lost their lives.

Talks Held on Increased Bilateral Trade With PRC

BK180319 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 18 Nov 84

[Text] India and China are to step up bilateral trade. The Federation of the Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry [FICCI] and the China Council for Promotion of International Trade are working out a joint trade plan to increase trade. At a meeting in Bombay yesterday between the FICCI president, Mr Rama Krishna Bajaj, and the Chinese vice minister of the state economic commission, Mr Zhao Weichen, it was decided to identify areas for expanding trade. The meeting also discussed the sharing of technical knowhow and expertise so as to enable Indians to participate in China's modernization program.

Talks Held With DPRK Foreign Trade Minister

BK181139 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 18 Nov 84

[Text] India is to cooperate with North Korea in its industrial development, particularly in the fields of heavy industry, machine building, mining, and earth moving equipment. The offer was made by the minister of state for industries, Mr N.R. Laskar to the visiting North Korean minister of foreign trade, Mr Choe Chong-kun when he called on him in New Delhi. The North Korean minister invited Indian investment in production of zinc and other nonferrous metals. Mr Choe Chong-kun also welcomed joint ventures in oil exploration and its production in his country.

Official on Further Trade Prospects With USSR

BK161625 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 16 Nov 84

[Text] The chairman of the Trade Fair Authority of India, Mr Mohammad Yunus, said that there is a tremendous scope for developing trade further with the Soviet Union. Addressing a panel discussion on Indo-Soviet trade and economic cooperation in New Delhi today, he expressed the confidence that the Soviet Union was capable of meeting India's high technology needs.

USSR 'Solidarity' Expressed on Indira Birthday

BK190945 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 19 Nov 84

[Text] The Soviet Union has expressed solidarity with the Indian people on the occasion of Mrs Gandhi's 67th birthday anniversary. It wished them new successes in furthering cause for which Mrs Gandhi gave her life. Leading Soviet newspapers under headlines "The Illustrious Daughter of India," "The Great Daughter of India" carried articles on Mrs Gandhi. They highlighted the immense contributions made by her to the cause of strengthening the country's political and economic independence.

Paper Welcomes 'Thaw' in Relations With Pakistan

BK171510 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 6 Nov 84 p 6

[Editorial: "A Welcome Thaw"]

[Text] President Zia's very presence at Mrs Gandhi's funeral and his subsequent meeting with Mr Rajiv Gandhi has fortunately helped defuse rising tensions between India and Pakistan that had become a major cause for concern barely a week ago. Since July, when India broke the on-going dialogue and exchanges with Pakistan on charges of interference and even indirect complicity in the Punajb troubles, relations had steadily deteriorated. Continuing U.S. supplies of military hardware to Pakistan and that country's nuclear programme had resulted in renewed anxieties, and a flurry of statements regarding gathering war clouds had begun to rouse apprehension that a conflict could not be ruled out whether by accident or design.

The Pakistan president has sought to allay these fears by reiterating his sincere desire for peace and cooperative relations with India. He has expressed the hope that the accession of a youthful Indian leader augurs well for a fresh approach. He was at pains to deny allegations of interference in Punjab in any manner or encouraging secessionist elements or anything calculated to destabilise India. He also disavowed any ambition to develop nuclear weapons capability let alone an "Islamic Bomb", and saw in this very nomenclature a malicious, propagandist bias against a purely peaceful and research programme. More positively, he called for an early resumption of the dialogue between the two countries and of the work of the joint commission, one aspect of which would be promoting better information exchange. He also said that the first batch of Indian hijackers held in Pakistan would be brought to trial "fairly soon" and that formalities in

this regard were in the process of being completed. He pooh-poohed alarmist inferences from routine military exercises that both sides conduct or certain border incidents, including one in the Siachen Glacier region of the high Karakorum where the J&K [Jammu and Kashmir] line of actual control is not demarcated. Here, too, one flag meeting had been held and another is proposed. The message is clear. Pakistan, President Zia says, is not out to exploit India's current difficulties but would rather get back to the table. This is a sentiment that Mr Rajiv Gandhi should fully reciprocate.

Reportage on Alleged Assault on Indian Official

Foreign Office Spokesman's Statement

BK171608 Karachi Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 17 Nov 84

[Text] A statement issued by the Foreign Office spokesman says an Indian official, who had come along with Indian pilgrims, engaged in a scuffle with three Sikhs at a Sikh holy shrine in Lahore on 10 November. Soon after receiving complaints from the Indian Embassy officials, a magistrate investigated this incident and offered to institute a case although no one was injured. But the Indian official left for India.

The fact is that Mr O.P. Tandon, who was among the 30 liaison officers coming from India, indulged in a scuffle with three pilgrims at a Sikh holy shrine in Lahore at 2130 on 10 November. He alleged that he was assaulted and by 0600 the next day the three alleged pilgrims were identified. The pilgrims said that Mr Tandon was an officer in the intelligence department and was gathering information about them. He was illegally searching their goods and frightening them. There was no sign of any injury or bruise on Mr Tandon's body. In spite of this, the magistrate offered to take legal action, but Mr Tandon did not agree to this and left for India on 11 November.

Further Comment by Spokesman

BK181635 Karachi Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 18 Nov 84

[Text] A Foreign Office spokesman told newsmen in Islamabad today that despite furor in certain sections in India over the question of Sikh pilgrims, Pakistan continues to adhere to its principled policy and will make fullest efforts to have peaceful and good neighborly and cooperative relations with India. He stated this while answering questions about a minor incident at the Sikh holy shrine of Nankana Sahib on 10 November which has been presented in an exaggerated and distorted manner by the Indian spokesman. The spokesman said keeping in view the bitterness found in Sikhs, the Government of Pakistan had urged the Indian Government to reduce the number of pilgrims and to explain the entire situation to them. Citizens of other countries contacting the Pakistani embassies were also advised to stop their visit to their sacred places until next year. The Pakistan president had himself appealed to all pilgrims to respect the sanctity of the birthday ceremony of Guru Nanak [founder of the Sikh religion]. The spokesman said Guru Nanak's birthday ceremonies passed on very well and no serious incident took place.

However, we were surprised and disappointed that an Indian Government spokesman and the media made a number of baseless allegations against the Pakistan Government. For example, the Indian spokesman accused Pakistan of bringing together supporters of Khalistan movement at Nankana Sahib. The spokesman said this allegation is totally baseless as Pakistan had neither called nor invited any Sikh pilgrims. Similarly, this allegation is also incorrect that Pakistan had incited pilgrims to make statements against India. Contrary to this, the Government of Pakistan had urged the pilgrims to refrain from political activities.

The spokesman said the Indian spokesman has presented the minor incident of scuffle between a junior Indian official — coming with Indian pilgrims — and three Canadian pilgrims in an exaggerated and distorted manner. The spokesman said the Government of Pakistan has always displayed a spirit of goodwill in words and deeds. President Ziaul Haq's meeting with Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi on 4 November has generated a hope of constructive and positive progress in the development of bilateral relations. The spokesman said under these circumstances Pakistan can only regret that certain sections in India are trying to create misunderstanding and to vitiate the atmosphere. We are disappointed that they presented a minor incident in an exaggerated manner which reflects their negative attitude. We hope that the Indian Government will view this incident in the right perspective and will concede that the Government of Pakistan has displayed appropriate and right conduct.

The spokesman said Pakistan and India are bound by an agreement not to indulge in propaganda against each other. This restriction, which is included in the Simla Agreement, applies specially to the official mass media and the radio and television.

In reply to a question, the spokesman said Pakistan has not imposed restriction on visiting Sikh holy shrines by people of other communities because any decision in this connection can be taken only by the Sikhs.

Replying to another question about the entry of Jagjit Singh Chauhan into Pakistan, the spokesman referred to a meeting of four senior Indian journalists with President Mohammad Ziaul Haq in New Delhi on 4 November. When the president was asked whether Pakistan will issue visa to Jagjit Singh Chauhan, he said that Jagjit Singh Chauhan would not be allowed to visit Pakistan.

In reply to a question, the spokesman said the Indian Embassy has informed Pakistan that the Indian ambassador, Mr Sharma, has gone to India for consultations.

DAWN Reports on Incident

GF181630 Karachi DAWN in English 15 Nov 84 p 1

[Text] Islamabad, Nov 14: Pakistan on Wednesday described Indian allegations regarding bringing together supporters of the Khalistan movement at Nankana Sahib [venue of Sikh shrine in Pakistan] as baseless, false and totally wrong.

A Foreign Office spokesman in a statement said: "Actually, the Government of Pakistan did not bring or invite any of the pilgrims," as alleged by an Indian spokesman in New Delhi on Tuesday.

The Foreign Office spokesman said the unwarranted and unjust attempt to blame Pakistan for statements by some of the visiting Sikh pilgrims make it necessary for Pakistan to explain the factual position.

The Indian spokesman was totally wrong in accusing Pakistan of bringing together supporters of the Khalistan movement at Nankana Sahib. Actually, the Government of Pakistan did not bring or invite any of the pilgrims. A great majority of them, number-

ing over 1,600, came from India. They were selected and sponsored by the Indian Government. A much smaller number of pilgrims came from some other foreign countries on their own.

The Indian spokesman was equally wrong in alleging that pilgrims were encouraged to indulge in an anti-Indian tirade. The factual position is that in view of the special circumstances obtaining this year, the Government of Pakistan made public appeals to the pilgrims to respect the sanctity of the occasion and avoid activities of a political nature.

By the large, the pilgrims complied with the appeal. Instead of appreciating the efforts made by the Government of Pakistan, the Indian spokesman has made a ludicrious attempt to hold Pakistan responsible for sentiments expressed by some pilgrims inside the sacred precincts of the shrines.

The Indian spokesman also distorted the object of the presence of the Federal Minister for Religious Affairs at Nankana Sahib on Nov. 8. In accordance with a long-established practice, the minister was present at the religious function marking the birth anniversary of Guru Nanak. He felicitated the pilgrims, expressed respect for their religion and explained to the audience the facilities for pilgrimage extended by the Government of Pakistan.

Interior Minister Resigns for 'Personal Reasons'

BK190814 Karachi Overseas Service in Urdu 0800 GMT 19 Nov 84

[Excerpt] Federal Interior Minister Mahmud A. Haroon called on President Mohammad Ziaul Haq last evening and submitted his resignation for personal reasons. The president reluctantly accepted his resignation.

DAWN: Indian Allegations on U.S. Cooperation Rejected

GF181820 Karachi DAWN in English 13 Nov 84 p 1

[Text] Islamabad, Nov 12: Pakistan on Monday denied that it had given consent for creating U.S. military strategic stocks in the country, a statement of the Foreign Office said.

The statement said: "All-India radio disseminated this fictitious and concocted report in violation of the Pakistan-India agreement on prevention of hostile propaganda."

Following is the text of the statement issued here on Monday by the Foreign Office:

"The allegation broadcast by All-India radio today that Pakistan has given its consent for creating U.S. military strategic stocks in Pakistan is totally false and baseless.

"The Government of Pakistan regrets that in violation of the Pakistan-India agreement on prevention of hostile propaganda, All-India radio has disseminated this fictitious and concocted report.

USSR Envoy Links Afghan Pullout, Noninterference

NC181715 Paris AFP in English 1647 GMT 18 Nov 84

[Text] Karachi, Nov 18 (AFP) — Soviet Ambassador in Pakistan Vitaliy Smirnov said here today that the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan could begin and be completed as soon as an agreement banning foreign intereference in Afghanistan's internal affairs is signed by its southern neighbours, particularly Pakistan.

Speaking at Karachi Press Club, he said that the Soviet-backed Afghan Government had agreed to help repatriate millions of Afghan refugees, now living in Pakistan and Iran, in case an agreement on non-interference was signed by these countries.

It was the first time that the Soviet ambassador has spoken on the prospects of withdrawal of Soviet occupation troops from Afghanistan.

He urged Pakistan to hold direct bilateral talks with Afghanistan to settle all mutual issues and establish good-neighbourly and friendly relations, adding that Afghanistan's southern neighbours were the main conduit of foreign arms and various supplies to Afghan rebels.

From there foreign intelligence agencies directed subversion, propaganda and other hostile activities against Afghanistan, Mr. Smirnov said.

Further Remarks by Envoy

BK190947 Karachi Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 19 Nov 84

[Text] Soviet Ambassador Smirnov has said that his country attaches great importance to relations with Pakistan. Speaking at the Karachi Press Club, he mentioned the Soviet assistance for Pakistan Steel and other projects.

The ambassador said that the aim of indirect talks between Pakistan and Kabul's representative is to find a political solution for the Afghanistan problem. That is why we consider it a step in the right direction.

Syrian Vice President, Foreign Minister Visit

17 November Arrival

LD171349 Tehran IRNA in English 1334 GMT 17 Nov 84

[Text] Tehran, Nov. 17, IRNA — The Syrian vice-president 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam, accompanied by the Syrian foreign affairs minister, Faruq Shar', arrived in Tehran this afternoon for talks with officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The Syrian vice-president is to deliver a message of Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad to his Iranian counterpart, President 'Ali Khamene'i.

The Syrian officials were greeted at the Tehran Mehrabad International Airport by Foreign Affairs Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati, Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister 'Ali Mohammad Besharati and a number of other officials as well as ambassadors of Arab and Islamic countries to Tehran.

Khaddam Comments on Visit

LD171727 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 17 Nov 84

[Excerpt] After arriving, in an interview with our correspondent on the purpose of his trip to Iran, 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam said: Recent developments in the region make it necessary for officials from both countries to exchange views; therefore, I was commissioned by Hafiz al-Asad to hold talks with Iranian officials on possible outcomes of these developments, and also to have a necessary review of further resistance to imperialist and Zionist plans.

Khaddam was asked to comment on the recent ties among Jordan, Iraq and Egypt and the possibility of a new American-backed bloc. The Syrian vice president said that some of these axes exist in connection with the Arab-Israeli conflict and the aim is to expand the Camp David trend and pave the way for Reagan's plan. It is obvious that some of these axes, that is, the tripartite ties among the stated countries, are contrary to the interests of regional nations.

Khamene'i-Khaddam Meeting

LD171949 Tehran IRNA in English 1927 GMT 17 Nov 84

[Text] Tehran, Nov. 17, IRNA — President 'Ali Khamene'i and visiting Syrian Vice-President 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam held two hours of talks on regional and bilateral issues Saturday evening.

President Khamene'i expressed appreciation for a warm and friendly message he received during the meeting from his Syrian counterpart Hafiz al-Asad.

He requested that his warm greetings be conveyed to President al-Asad.

Khaddam emphasised the complete coordination between Syria and Iran on confronting the aggressor Iraqi regime and the need for strategic cooperation with all other front-line Muslim countries against the Zionist regime.

He said Syria was confident that the existing cooperation with Iran would only lead to triumph.

The latest developments in the region were also raised in the talks.

Other high-ranking officials were present in the talks, including Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati and his Syrian counterpart Faruq Shar', Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister 'Ali Mohammad Besharati and Iranian presidential advisor Mostafa Mir Salim as well as ambassadors from both countries.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani-Khaddam Meeting

LD181158 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 18 Nov 84

[Text] Syrian Vice President 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam met this morning with Hashemi-Rafsanjani, speaker of the Islamic Consultative Assembly in the presence of Foreign Affairs Minister Velayati; chief adviser to the persident, Mir-Salim; Syrian Foreign Affairs Minister Faruq Shar'; head of the Majlis Foreign Policy Commission Ahmad 'Azizi; and the ambassadors of the two countries.

During the course of the meeting, Khaddam emphasized the need for the Muslim progressive countries to have a common strategy. He also asked for further coordination and unity among Muslim countries in the confrontation against aggression by the regime occupying Jerusalem. He reiterated Syria's support for the Islamic Republic of Iran vis-a-vis the Iraqi aggressive regime, and submitted a verbal invitation from President Hafiz al-Asad to Hashemi-Rafsanjani requesting him to visit Syria.

While expressing gratitude to the Syrian high-ranking delegation for visiting Iran, Hashemi-Rafsanjani said: [announcer read] Mr Khaddam's report is very promising for us, particularly in light of the changes and moves that have taken place among the Muslim people of the region. It will be a very good example to all Muslims for defense [as heard]. Certainly Syria will continue its struggle against the usurping Israel; we assure you that we will soon remove this cancerous tumor of the Iraqi Ba'thist regime so that peace can more speedily return to the Middle East.

Velayati-Shar' Meeting

LD181250 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 18 Nov 84

[Text] The Syrian Vice-President, 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam, accompanied by that country's foreign minister, Faruq Shar', this morning met with the foreign minister, Velayati, and the top advisor to the president, Mir-Salim. In the course of this meeting, held in the presence of several Foreign Affairs Ministry officials and the two countries' ambassadors, Velayati expressed delight at such meetings and said they will lead to closer ties and further

coordination among the Muslim progressive countries of the region. Velayati referred to the strategic relations and fraternal union between the two countries. He emphasized expansion and strengthening of these relations and the need for coordination among regional countries. He also stressed practical measures in this connection. Referring to the agreements reached between Khamene'i and Hafiz al-Asad, and also to agreements with the leaders of Libya and Algeria reached during Khamene'i's recent trip to these countries, Velayati said: We are glad to see that these agreements are entering the practical phase. In the same connection a meeting of foreign ministers is taking place in Tripoli.

During this meeting, Khaddam said: Syria gives a special priority to strengthening relations with Iran and views the trip of the Islamic president of Iran, Khamene'i, as an important turning point in bilateral relations and in the union of progressive countries against the conspiracies of imperialism, zionism and reaction. He went on: In order to achieve full domination in the region and realize its Middle East plan, the United States has created an axis using such reactionary governments as Jordan, Iraq, and Egypt. It is up to the progressive countries to undertake an active struggle to expose and break this axis, which would eventually lead to the destruction of the Palestine hope.

During this meeting, discussions were held and views exchanged on the coordination between the two countries in the decisive struggle against the Iraqi regime and a serious and overall confrontation against the regime occupying Jerusalem.

Khaddam, Velayati on Visit

LD181403 Tehran IRNA in English 1310 GMT 18 Nov 84

[Text] Tehran, Nov. 18, IRNA — The Syrian vice-president, 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam, who arrived in Tehran Saturday with a message for President 'Ali Khamene'i from President Hafiz al-Asad of Syria, left Tehran this morning.

'Abd al-Halim Khaddam, who headed a high ranking delegation which included foreign affairs minister, Faruq Shar', during his stay, held talks with President Khamene'i, Prime Minister Hoseyn Musavi, Majlis Speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani and Foreign Affairs Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati.

Speaking to reporters prior to his departure, he described his trip as successful and added that he had traveled to Iran to exchange views with Iranian officials on the latest developments in the region. He told reporters both sides still shared common views on the issues discussed.

Commenting on the visit of the Syrian delegation, Velayati said that it was of special importance. He said that meetings between the Syrian and Iranian officials had positive results. He said the joint strategy of Iran and Syria in the region and international politics were discussed.

Velayati further added that the exchange of views with officials of Syria was highly useful. He noted that Syria has close relations with Iran and that both countries have been fighting in the same front against imperialism and international Zionism. Velayati hoped that relations between the two countries and other progressive Muslim countries would expand further.

The Syrian delegation was seen off at Tehran's Mehrabad International Airport by Foreign Affairs Minister Velayati, Presidential Adviser Mostafa Mir-Salim, Deputy Foreign Minister 'Ali Mohammad Besharati and other Foreign Ministry officials as well as the Syrian Ambassador to Tehran, Ibrahim Ahmad al-Yunis.

Prime Minister on Syrian Stand

LD182318 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 18 Nov 84

[Text] 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam, the Syrian vice-president and Faruq Shar that country's minister of foreign affairs, met and conferred with Mir Hoseyn Musavi, the prime minister, before leaving Tehran this morning. At this meeting, Velayati, the minister of foreign affairs and Mir-Salim, the president's top adviser, were present. The prime minister expressed pleasure over Syria's strengthening of its stance against the regime occupying Jerusalem and said: Syria's resistance has produced satisfactory results during the past year. We hope that this resistance would continue with utmost zeal. Mir Hoseyn Musavi added: Israel understands only the language of weapons and the continuance of its armed Forces in southern Lebanon. The prime minister also referred to the relationship between Iraq and America and said: Resumption of political relations with America is in fact bringing the long-standing secret relationship between Saddam Husayn's regime and America out in the open. It is nothing new. This issue should serve as a warning to countries in the world which claim to be struggling against America. This action taken by the Iraqi regime reveals the nature of this regime better than anything has before.

Then 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam, the Syrian vice-president, in reply referred to the [word indistinct] of the regime of the Islamic Republic of Iran and its victory over the conspiracies of its enemies. Commenting on the shaky situation in Israel, he said: Israel is plagued with many problems. If it were not for the help provided by the West and America, it would not have been able to last even 2 days. He added: We have always defended the resistance put up by the people of Lebanon against Israel and will continue to do so.

uf headlineSyrian Economic Minister Arrives for Talks

LD171752 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 17 Nov 84

[Text] Dr Salim Yasin, Syrian minister of economy and foreign trade, arrived in Tehran this afternoon to hold talks on economic and trade relations between Iran and Syria. He was welcomed by the minister of financial and economic affairs and a number of other officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Salim Yasin in an interview with our correspondent on his arrival in Tehran said: Iran and Syria have economic and trade relations. We are trying to help the growth, expansion, and strengthening of these relations. Within this framework, a number of meetings have taken place between delegations from the two countries. A joint committee has been formed to deal with the trade and economic

relations. This committee will hold meetings in the capital cities of both countries every once in a while; currently the committee is holding its sessions in Tehran.

The Syrian minister of economy and foreign trade added: At this session, past developments in trade and economic relations between Iran and Syria and new facilities to further these relations will be reviewed.

In his talks with economic and trade officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Salim Yasin leads a 14 man Syrian delegation ofeconomic and trade officials. The Syrian trade and economic delegation will stay in Tehran for a week.

Musavi-Ardabili, Delegation Leave for Syria

LD190931 Tehran IRNA in English 0844 GMT 19 Nov 84

[Text] Tehran, Nov. 19, IRNA — A delegation headed by Chief Justice Ayatollah 'Abdolkarim Musavi-Ardabili, left here for Syria this morning. The visit is taking place on the invitation of the Syrian chief justice.

The delegation is composed of the spokesman of the High Judicial Council Hojjat ol-Eslam Moqtada'i, Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister 'Ali Mohammad Besharati, and head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting Mohammad Hashemi.

Armed Forces Joint Staff Issues Communiques

No 1,913

LD161707 Tehran IRNA in English 1650 GMT 16 Nov 84

[Text] Tehran, Nov. 16, IRNA — Over 10 Iraqi troops were either killed or wounded while two of their positions were demolished in the western fronts during the past 24 hours, announced the Joint Staff Command Communique No. 1,913 issued today.

Battle continued in all fronts accompanied by artillery and heavy gun fire exchanges during which Iraqi movements and patrol activities were either suppressed or thwarted. Artillery duel was more intense in Shahrani and Hoseyniyeh regions in southern Iran where the Islamic combatants maintained fire supremacy.

Iraqi air activities were thwarted in all fronts by the anti-aircraft defence units and jet fighters of the Air Force of the Islamic Republic, during the said period.

In Arvand River battle scenes, the Gendarmerie forces zeroed in on the Iraqi positions, fortifications and logistic routes disturbing the movements and logistic activities of the enemy troops along Al-Faw-Basra axes and inflicted losses and casualties upon them.

Five houses and several shops were damaged as a result of Iraqi long-range fire upon Abadan over the said period, concluded the Joint Staff Command communique.

No 1,914

LD171610 Tehran IRNA in English 1551 GMT 17 Nov 84

[Text] Tehran, Nov. 17, IRNA — Iranian forces maintained the upper hand in battle action over Friday and Saturday, bombarding Iraqi enfantry and armoured units.

The Joint Staff Command said in its Communique 1,914, that enemy's infantry units in the Varameh and Chuman-Mostafa area were bombarded and their patrol units were intercepted while some of their soldiers were killed.

In the western front, Iranian forces bombarded Iraqi positions and paralyzed their engineering efforts to build trenches and minefields. At least 6 enemy weapons bunkers, 3 observation posts and a truck were destroyed and at least 20 Iraqi soldiers killed or wounded.

In the southern front, sporadic artillery duels continued and Islamic combatants strengthened their positions while bombarding enemy units by long-range artillery, which was reported to be heaviest in the Hoseyniyeh area.

In the Anbar River area and Jazzabeh region, enemy's engineering activities were halted by Iranian fire.

Two enemy trucks were reported destroyed in the west of Arvand River.

Meanwhile yesterday, Abadan was heavily bombarded by the Iraqi Army damaging 7 houses and shops.

No 1,915

LD181619 Tehran IRNA in English 1608 GMT 18 Nov 84

[Text] Tehran, Nov. 18, IRNA — One civilian was injured by Iraqi shelling in the southern city of Abadan Saturday and seven homes and a number of shops were damaged, the Joint Staff reported.

In the Ilam and Bakhtaran fronts the Islamic forces killed or wounded at least 30 Iraqi soldiers, destroying six weaponry positions and one personnel-carrying truck, military Communique No. 1,915 stated Sunday.

It said an enemy patrol unit attempted to penetrate the lines of the Islamic forces in the Sumar front of Bakhtaran Province on Friday but was forced to flee by the timely fire of the Iranian Muslim combatants.

There were sporadic exchanges of fire in the southern fronts where a number of Iraqi casualties were inflicted across the Arvand River.

A number of enemy troops were also killed in the northwestern fronts Saturday and parts of their positions were destroyed, it added.

Movements of an enemy company in the Sar Dasht border region were checked and more Iraqi casualties were inflicted.

Chief of Staff Confers With Montazeri

LD190726 Tehran IRNA in English 0658 GMT 19 Nov 84

[Text] Tehran, Nov. 19, IRNA — Chief of the Joint Staff of the Armed Forces Col. Sohrabi met and conferred with Ayatollah Hoseyn 'Ali Montazeri Saturday.

Congratulating Col. Sohrabi for his recent appointment to the post, Ayatollah Montazeri said that in the former regime the fate of the Army used to be determined by a handful of American NCO's.

At that time, the ayatollah stressed, Iran's Army was totally dependent on the United States politically and militarily and Iranian forces had nothing to do but to obey absolutely U.S. advisors.

But now, Ayatollah Montazeri noted, the Islamic Republic's Army was independent and made its own decisions.

During the meeting, in which Hojatt ol-Eslam Safaei, head of the Army Political-Ideological Office was also present, Ayatollah Montazeri emphasised the importance of the role the Army played in safeguarding the country.

Majlis Discusses Bill Exempting Weapons From Search

LD181840 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 18 Nov 84

[Excerpts] The Majlis met this morning under Speaker Hashemi-Rafsanjani and then continued its meeting under Deputy Speaker Mohammad Yazdi. A bill exempting weapons, ammunition, and equipment belonging to the Islamic Republic of Iran's Armed Forces, the Army, the Gendarmerie, the Police Department, the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps, and the Islamic Revolution committees from being searched, subjected to customs duties, tariff, and all other duties and costs, excluding transportation and storage charges, had its first reading. The bill in its general form was approved.

Foreign Ministry Delegation Leaves for Libya

LD181041 Tehran IRNA in English 1015 GMT 18 Nov 84

[Text] Tehran, Nov. 18, IRNA — The political deputy at Iran's Foreign Ministry Hoseyn Sheykh ol-Eslam, left here for Tripoli, Libya, heading a Foreign Ministry delegation this morning.

The Iranian delegation will take part in a meeting of deputies of Foreign Affairs Ministries of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Syria, Libya and Algeria to be held in Tripoli.

'Mobilization Week' To Begin 24 Nov

LD181052 Tehran IRNA in English 1022 GMT 18 Nov 84

[Text] Tehran, Nov. 18, IRNA — The Central Headquarters of the Islamic Revolution's Guards Corps, in a statement issued here today on the occasion of the Basij (Mobilisation) Week to start Nov. 24, urged the Muslim people of Iran and members of the Basij Corps to take part in the special programmes of the week.

Referring to the fierce fight put up by the members of the Basij during the four years of the Iraqi-imposed war, the statement said, the corps has proved to the nation that they are the defenders of the Islamic Revolution of Iran and Islam.

The Basij Corps of the Islamic Revolution's Guards Corps was formed five years ago to materialise the objective of the formation of a 20 million strong army and the mobilisation of the committed forces is the vanguard of defending the world oppressed.

In an effort to appreciate the service of the Basij members, pay tribute to the martyrs, the MIA's, the POW's and also the disabled, the statement said, special ceremonies will be held throughout the country on the fifth anniversary of the decree of Imam Khomeyni, calling for the formation of 20 million strong army, for a period of one week beginning Nov. 24.